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09/883,530	06/18/2001	Gary Markofer	1574	2400

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EXAMINER

TRAN, HANH VAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3637

DATE MAILED: 06/05/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/883,530

Applicant(s)

MARKOFER, GARY

Examiner

Hanh V. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 June 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This is the First Office Action on the Merits from the examiner in charge of this application.

#### ***Specification***

2. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

#### ***Claim Objections***

3. The claims are objected to because they include reference characters which are not enclosed within parentheses.

Reference characters corresponding to elements recited in the detailed description of the drawings and used in conjunction with the recitation of the same element or group of elements in the claims should be enclosed within parentheses so as to avoid confusion with other numbers or characters which may appear in the claims. See MPEP § 608.01(m).

More specifically, in each of the independent claims 1, 14, and 22, "104" should be enclosed within parentheses.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. Claims 8-9, and 22-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which

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applicant regards as the invention. Claim 8, line 4, "front and rear edge" should be "front and rear edges". Claim 9, it is not clear what a "return" is. Claim 22, line 20, the term "components" lacks antecedent basis.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. Claims 1-4, 6, 9-13, and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 5,536,078 to Novikoff in view of USP 5,769,514 to Brown et al.

Novikoff discloses a modular computer desk comprising a corner section, such as shown in Fig 20, comprising all the elements recited in the above listed claims including a pentagonal work surface, a pedestal mounted to the underside of the work surface, the front edge of the work surface being at a right angle to the elevation of the work surface, a return attached thereto on both sides of the corner section, a shelf supported on a pedestal, adjacent furniture components being abutted to and connected to the corner section on both sides of the corner section, the

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adjacent furniture components having a pair of returns each having a back panel thereon, the work surface is wood. The differences being that Novikoff does not disclose a keyboard platform mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means, the work surface is covered with high pressure laminate.

Brown et al discloses a computer desk comprising a work surface 10, such as shown in Fig 2, having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means 40; wherein the structure of the keyboard platform, the control switch, a surge protector unit with a plurality of electrical outlets, an aperture through the work surface, and wire management means provides a user friendly computer desk. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the structure Novikoff by providing having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means in order to provide a user friendly computer desk, as taught by Brown et al, since both teach alternate conventional computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed. With regard to the work surface being covered with high pressure laminate, it would

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have been obvious and well within the level of one skill in the art to cover the work surface with high pressure laminate in order to ease cleaning of the surface.

8. Claims 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Novikoff, as modified, as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of USP 5,130,494 to Simonton et al.

Novikoff discloses all the elements as discussed above except for the wire management being two J-shaped channels each mounted at a 90 degrees angle to each other disposed on the underside of the worksurface.

Simonton et al teaches the idea of a modular computer desk system having a wire management system, wherein the wire management system comprises at least two J-shaped channels, such as shown in Fig 28, each mounted at a 90 degrees angle to each other disposed on the underside of the worksurface adapted to receive wiring in order to a system for efficiently managing electrical and communications utilities associated with the work surface. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the wire management system of Novikoff, as modified, by providing at least two J-shaped channels, each mounted at a 90 degrees angle to each other disposed on the underside of the worksurface adapted to receive wiring in order to a system for efficiently managing electrical and communications utilities associated with the work surface, as taught by Simonton et al, since both teach alternate conventional modular computer desk system structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

9. Claims 14, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Novikoff in view of Brown et al and USP 4,345,803 to Heck.

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Novikoff discloses a modular computer desk comprising a corner section, such as shown in Fig 20, comprising all the elements recited in the above listed claims including a pentagonal work surface, a pedestal mounted to the underside of the work surface, the front edge of the work surface being at a right angle to the elevation of the work surface, a return attached thereto on both sides of the corner section, a shelf supported on a pedestal, adjacent furniture components being abutted to and connected to the corner section on both sides of the corner section, the adjacent furniture components having a pair of returns each having a back panel thereon, the work surface is wood. The differences being that Novikoff does not disclose a keyboard platform mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough.

Brown et al discloses a computer desk comprising a work surface 10, such as shown in Fig 2, having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means 40; wherein the structure of the keyboard platform, the control switch, a surge protector unit with a plurality of electrical outlets, an aperture through the work surface, and wire management means provides a user friendly computer desk. Heck teaches the idea of a computer desk comprising a work surface having an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner in order to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough. Therefore, it would have been

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obvious to modify the structure Novikoff by providing having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner thereof in order to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, thereby providing a user friendly computer desk, as taught by Brown et al and Heck, since both teach alternate conventional computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

10. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Novikoff, as modified, as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of USP 5,416,666 to Maguire, Jr.

Novikoff, as modified, discloses all the elements as discussed above except for the adjacent furniture components each having an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge, the component when in position abutting the corner section having its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle.

Maguire, Jr. teaches the idea of a computer desk system comprising an adjacent furniture component 18 having a front edge parallel to a back edge, a side edge normal to the front and rear edges, an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to the front edge thereof in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the adjacent furniture components of Novikoff, as modified, by providing each said furniture component with an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component, the component when positioning at certain orientation in abutting the corner section would have its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle, as taught by Maguire, Jr., since both teach alternate conventional



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computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

11. Claims 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Novikoff, as modified, as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Maguire, Jr.

Novikoff, as modified, discloses all the elements as discussed above except for the adjacent furniture components each having an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge, the component when in position abutting the corner section having its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle.

Maguire, Jr. teaches the idea of a computer desk system comprising an adjacent furniture component 18 having a front edge parallel to a back edge, a side edge normal to the front and rear edges, an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to the front edge thereof in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the adjacent furniture components of Novikoff, as modified, by providing each said furniture component with an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component, the component when positioning at certain orientation in abutting the corner section would have its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle, as taught by Maguire, Jr., since both teach alternate conventional computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

12. Claims 22-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Novikoff in view of Brown et al, Heck and Maguire, Jr.

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Novikoff discloses a modular computer desk comprising a corner section, such as shown in Fig 20, comprising all the elements recited in the above listed claims including a pentagonal work surface, a pedestal mounted to the underside of the work surface, the front edge of the work surface being at a right angle to the elevation of the work surface, a return attached thereto on both sides of the corner section, a shelf supported on a pedestal, adjacent furniture components being abutted to and connected to the corner section on both sides of the corner section, the adjacent furniture components having a pair of returns each having a back panel thereon, the work surface is wood. The differences being that Novikoff does not disclose a keyboard platform mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, the work surface is covered with high pressure laminate, and the adjacent furniture components each having an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge, the component when in position abutting the corner section having its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle.

Brown et al discloses a computer desk comprising a work surface 10, such as shown in Fig 2, having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means 40; wherein the structure of the keyboard platform, the control switch, a surge protector unit with a plurality of electrical outlets, an aperture through the work surface, and wire management means provides a user friendly

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computer desk. Heck teaches the idea of a computer desk comprising a work surface having an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner in order to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the structure Novikoff by providing having a keyboard platform 20 mounted underneath the front edge of the corner section, a control switch electrically connected to a surge protector unit 38 having a plurality of electrical outlets therein, an aperture through the work surface near the 90 degrees angle at the rear corner in order to permit a plurality of computer component line cords to pass therethrough, wire management means in order to provide a user friendly computer desk, as taught by Brown et al and Heck, since both teach alternate conventional computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed. With regard to the work surface being covered with high pressure laminate, it would have been obvious and well within the level of one skill in the art to cover the work surface with high pressure laminate in order to ease cleaning of the surface.

Maguire, Jr. teaches the idea of a computer desk system comprising an adjacent furniture component 18 having a front edge parallel to a back edge, a side edge normal to the front and rear edges, an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to the front edge thereof in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the adjacent furniture components of Novikoff, as modified, by providing each said furniture component with an oblique edge at a 45 degree angle to its front edge in order to provide a versatile adjacent furniture component, the component when positioning at certain orientation in abutting the corner section would have its oblique edge intersecting the front edge of the corner section at 90 degree angle, as taught by Maguire, Jr., since both teach alternate conventional

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computer desk structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

*Conclusion*

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Hayward, Conner et al, Schairbaum, Mollenkopf et al, Grabowski, Tokunaga et al, Henriott, Capo-Bianco, and Steinbeck all show structures similar to various elements of applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hanh V. Tran whose telephone number is (703) 308-6302. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, and alternate Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (703) 308-2486. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

HVT *HVT*  
June 2, 2002

LANNA MAI  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

*Lanna Mai*